considered for inclusion under AIBP. Components of projects not receiving other assistance can also be included under AIBP. The details of CLA/ grant released under AIBP during the last three years to the States of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar are given in Annexure. [*See* Appendix 207, Annexure No. 6]

(b) to (d) The details of the projects taken up under RIDF during the last three years in the States of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar and projects completed out of these by 31st October, 2005 are also given in Annexure and the details of those covered under AIBP in these States during the last three years are included in the Annexure. [*See* Appendix 207, Annexure No. 6]

Inter-linking of rivers

1614. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that inter-linking of rivers project has been conceptualized not to meet domestic water needs of the people but to meet the demand for growing commercial agricultural activities;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the technological aspect of the river-linking concept was based on the knowledge of the European rivers and not on the realities related to rivers in the country; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The ILR Project envisages to meet domestic water needs of rural and urban population in the enroute link commands/areas on priority, in addition to agriculture requirements.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. The river-linking concept has emanated from the ground realities of in equal distribution of water resources among various river basins in the country causing recurring floods and droughts.

Study of river linking project

1615. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the project inter-linking of rivers may affect the fresh water supply to Bay of Bengal and the salinity conditions which would in turn affect the monsoon and the economy of the country;

(b) if so, whether meeting of scientists held at National Academy of Science, Bangalore during the year 2006 also opined the above suggested for further studies;

(c) if so, the action taken on the above report; and

(d) the status of the project of inter-linking of rivers, as on today?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): (a) No, Sir. The average annual water resources potential of the Indian reivers is assessed as 1869 BCM whereas the utilizable surface water is only 690 BCM and the remaining water is bound to drain into the sea. The proposal of interlinking of rivers as per the National Perspective Plan would enable utilization of about 170-200 BCM of monsoon flows and still substantial quantum of water is bound to join sea. Further, even this volume of water involved in ILR will not get completely consumed and would in effect, flow to sea (Bay of Bengal) with changed routes by way of return flows and ground water recharge.

(b) and (c) From the 'Meeting Report' published in January, 2006 issue of 'Current Science' Magazine, it is learnt that a one-day meeting of earth scientists was held at the Indian Academy of Science, Bangalore on 15th October, 2005 for discussion: 'if the proposed river linkages were to reduce the total annual run-off into the Bay of Bengal (BoB) or the rate at which run-off is released into it, then do river linkages have any significant consequence on the Indian Monsoon Rainfall?'

According to the Report, the estimated fresh water influxes into the BoB from local precipitation and through river discharge are 4700 and 3000 Km^3/yr respectively. The loss due to evaporation is about 3600 Km^3/year. It was opined that reduced run-off, a certain consequence of linking rivers in India to increase residence time of water on land, could affect monsoon rainfall both in amount, duration and spatial distribution. However, as admitted by them, the scientists were not in a position to quantify the effects precisely and felt that further studies such as observational and numerical simulations are needed. They concluded that their arguments are based on simplistic interpretation of presently available data on sea surface temperature (SST), salinity and wind velocities over the BoB and a more accurate relation between the run-off input and monsoon phenomenon will require more and credible datasets on various ocean, atmosphere and land based physico-chemical and biological parameters and modeling them for their inter-connectedness.

Since the proposed quantum of utilization under ILR Project is not significant in relation to the volume of flow into the BoB as assessed by the earth scientists, it is not appropriate at this stage to hypothesis in the absence of detailed and accurate studies that the impacts due to ILR (if any) will be only negative.

(d) The Ministry of Water Resources (MOWAR) (erstwhile Ministry of Irrigation) and Central Water Commission (CWC) formulated a National Perspective Plan (NPP) for Water Resources Development in 1980 envisaging inter basin transfer of water from surplus basins to deficit basins/ areas which comprises of two components, namely, Himalyan Rivers Development Component and Peninsular River Development component. National Water Development Agency (NWDA) was set up under the MOWR in 1982 for carrying out various technical studies to establish the feasibility of the proposal of NPP and to give concrete shape to it. Based on various studies conducted, NWDA has identified 30 links for preparing Feasibility Reports (FRs). NWDA has completed feasibility reports for 14 links under Peninsular Rivers Development component and two links under Himalayan Rivers Development component. A tripartite agreement was signed among Government of India and concerned States of Madhya Pradesh & Uttar Pradesh on 25.8.2005 in respect of one priority link under Peninsular Component *viz.* Ken-Betwa link for preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR).

Clearance of projects under NRAP

1616. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether State Government of Maharashtra had submitted a detailed project report for environmental clearance under the National River Action Plan (NRAP) with respect to different rivers passing through and alongside different towns/districts in Maharashtra for implementation under the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the details of the project proposals with the cost thereof;

(c) at what stage of clearance the different projects stand at present with the Central Government; and

(d) by when, the different projects are likely to be cleared by Government?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): (a) to (c) As per Ministry of Environment & Forests, no detailed project